

Beyond Binaries in Education Research

**Edited by Warren Midgley,
Mark A. Tyler, Patrick Alan Danaher,
and Alison Mander**

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
New York London

First published 2011
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Simultaneously published in the UK
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2011 Taylor & Francis

The right of Warren Midgley, Mark A. Tyler, Patrick Alan Danaher, and Alison Mander to be identified as authors of the editorial material, and of the authors for their individual chapters, has been asserted by them in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Typeset in Sabon by IBT Global.
Printed and bound in the United States of America on acid-free paper by IBT Global.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark Notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Beyond binaries in education research / edited by Warren Midgley . . . [et al.].

p. cm. — (Routledge research in education)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Education—Research—Methodology. I. Midgley, Warren.

LB1028.2.B48 2011

370.72—dc22

2010047158

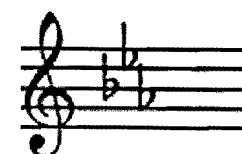
ISBN13: 978-0-415-88512-6 (hbk)

ISBN13: 978-0-203-81660-8 (ebk)

For those who have helped us move
beyond the binary of me/you with love.

ever thine
ever mine
ever ours

Ludwig van Beethoven, "Immortal Beloved" letter 3



Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	xiii
<i>List of Tables</i>	xv
<i>Foreword: Renewing the Critical Function of Education Research</i>	xvii
MICHAEL SINGH	
<i>Preface</i>	xxi
BRUCE MUIRHEAD AND SAMANTHA DEAN	
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xxiii
1 Constructing and Deconstructing Binaries in Education Research	1
ALISON MANDER, PATRICK ALAN DANAHER, MARK A. TYLER, AND WARREN MIDGLEY	
PART I	
Researching Researchers	
Part I Introduction	15
WARREN MIDGLEY	
2 Methodology, the Western, and Myself The West/Non-West Binary in a Non-Western Educational Researcher's Pursuit of a PhD	17
AKIHIRO SAITO	
3 Determining a Voice to Use in Writing About Mixed Methods Research	27
DINAH R. DOVONA-OPE	
4 Beyond Observer and Observed in Reflexive Analysis	34
WARREN MIDGLEY	

5	Destabilizing Binaries in Early Childhood Education: The Possibilities of Pedagogical Documentation LAURIE KOCHER AND VERONICA PACINI-KETCHABAW	46
6	Moving Beyond Sedentarism: Conceptual and Empirical Developments PATRICK ALAN DANAHER AND ROBYN HENDERSON	60
 PART II Privileging Participants		
	Part II Introduction MARK A. TYLER	81
7	A Tango in VET: Whose Notion of TAFE Teacher Leads? MARK A. TYLER	83
8	Beyond the Binaries That Keep Us From Writing With and Like Children SHELLEY KINASH AND KIRSTEN KINASH	100
9	Burying the Binaries: Getting Discourses to Converge in a Program for First-Year University Students ROBYN HENDERSON AND KAREN NOBLE	119
10	Not Education Research Binaries—Just Parts of a Whole LINDY ABAWI	131
11	Beyond the Binary of Researcher/Researched: The Complexities of Participatory Action Research KAREN HAWKINS	147
12	Understanding Cultural Differences Between Western and Confucian Teaching and Learning PENG ZHOU AND CEC PEDERSEN	161

PART III Considering Contexts

	Part III Introduction ALISON MANDER	179
13	From Maintaining to Sustaining: Moving Beyond Binaries Toward a Framework for Cultural Sustainability in Higher Education SARA HAMMER, JILL LAWRENCE, AND HENK HUIJSER	181
14	Exposing Bush Binaries: Using the Media to Problematize Gender SHERILYN LENNON	195
15	Expectations of Ability and Disability at University: The Fine Art of Managing Lives, Perceptions, and Curricula SARA HAMMER, SHALENE WERTH, PETER DUNN, KYM LAWSON, AND DANIELLE D'ABADIE	211
16	Formal, Informal, and Incidental Learning: How Recreational- Diving Instructors Achieve Competency KEITH CARDWELL	221
17	Limited-Term Contracts and Tenure: The Case of Foreign- Language Teachers in a Japanese University SEAN MEHMET	232
18	Beyond Educator/Practitioner Binaries: Overcoming Barriers to Cooperation Using Professional Cultural Axes R. TODD HARTLE, ROSEMARY J. SMITH, STEPHEN ADKISON, DJ WILLIAMS, AND PAUL BEARDSLEY	242
	Respondent's Text MÁIRÍN KENNY	259
	Contributors	265
	Index	273

Figures

4.1	Reflexivity as looking in a mirror.	35
4.2	Reflexivity as me looking at you looking at me.	37
4.3	“Looking at me . . . looking at you . . . looking at me.”	38
10.1	The ‘helixical’ relationship built a closely entwined thread of understanding.	138
11.1	Different aspects of the PAR process are fluidly interwoven with one another.	152
12.1	A conceptual framework to illustrate cultural differences between the Western and the Confucian traditions of teaching and learning.	163
13.1	Operationalizing cultural sustainability.	186

Tables

7.1	A Synthesis of Kat's Position as Obtained From the Analysis of Her Interview	96
8.1	The Characteristics of Adult, Controlled, and Empowered Child Authorship	114
9.1	Margaret and Erin's Interview	125
10.1	The Researcher/Teacher Binary From My Perspective in 2003	139
10.2	The Researcher/Teacher Binary From My Perspective in 2007	139
13.1	Preliminary Differences Between Concepts	185

Foreword

Renewing the Critical Function of Education Research

Michael Singh

The either/or logic of binaries means that one part of a binary is positioned as being normal, while the other part of the binary is constructed as deviant or deficient. There is a hierarchical relationship in a binary where one part of the either/or pair is superior and powerful, while the other part is weak and submissive. For instance, those in the powerless position are seen as having all the faults, rather than the dominant interests being questioned because they render the former's claims to intellectual equality invisible. The challenge is in understanding and questioning the role educational research plays in reproducing such a position, despite claims to the contrary. Such binaries impact on the ways in which education researchers perceive relationships, such as between the hierarchical ordering of inequitable power relations and people's acting as equals. They also impact on how we relate to other people, mostly by forestalling conceptual advances in education research and thus being complicit in sociocultural marginalization. For example, the focus on the theory/practice binary privileges education researchers as theorists and teachers as practitioners, forestalling any prospects of engaging the divisions in different forms of knowledge produced by researchers and teachers under different conditions of labor. The theory/practice binary ignores the different time frames driving the knowledge of education researchers and teachers, and the divisions this creates in the types of knowledge they engage. Engaging the theory/practice binary means understanding the difference associated with the transfer, translation, and transformation of knowledge arising from the expectation of short-term effectiveness and influence as opposed to operating within a longer time perspective.

There are multiple ways of conceptualizing binaries as suggested by the range of terms that resonate with this concept: bifurcation, dichotomy, dualism, opposition, polarization, and schism. This terminological complexity points to the challenges of providing a widely acceptable, unambiguous, or canonical definition of ways of moving beyond binaries in and through education research. However, binaries provide an important focus for critique in education research, even while such research is implicated in perpetuating binaries. An important contribution of the education research

in this book is in the identification, construction, and analysis of binaries, and, in some instances, in their disruption rather than reproduction.

Education researchers have various strategies for critiquing the hierarchical power relations evident in binaries in order to engage and perhaps move beyond them. A familiar strategy entails rendering binaries as necessarily and inescapably persistent—reproducing them in spite of an expressed desire to do otherwise. Education research can propagate an affirmative disposition toward the existing hierarchical ordering of binaries: justifying rather than challenging the binaries. Much education research is conservative and immunizes against possibilities for changing binaries, neutralizing alternative ways of conceptualizing education and research. An alternative strategy is to reverse the binary oppositions, for instance, by education researchers creating spaces for worker-intellectuals to make their knowledge claims known. At least where binary categories are contested by being inverted they are shown not to be innocent.

The accounts in this book provide variegated insights into the divergent and even contradictory strategies education researchers use to trouble particular binaries. Indicating a multiplicity of strategies, these studies consider the contradictions, possibilities, and limitations of moving beyond binaries.

Through deconstruction it is possible to shake loose the static positioning of the either/or logic that constrains thought and action. The critical analysis and interrogation of binaries can lead to efforts to disrupt the marginalization of what is presumed to be the weaker member of the pair. Analyses of constructions of otherness provide the potential for disrupting binaries. Redefining the relationship between the pairs that constitute the binary can see them as being in contact rather than oppositional, thereby enlarging understanding of both as mutually constituted. This brings to light the complexity and contingency of the binary relationships, showing that the two entities are more interdependent and mutually influential than oppositional and antithetical. Detecting similarities, in spite of striking differences, between binaries enables the rejection of binary ways of thinking and the foreclosing of understanding. This opens up spaces for new interests, understandings, and translations, catalyzing the potential for rediscovery. The emphasis here is on the fluidity and permeability of the boundaries beyond both halves of the binary so as to reconstruct these relations positively.

Education researchers have another strategy for engaging and moving beyond binaries, namely whereby the subjects are positioned as knowing agents confronting the ways in which normal/deficient are researched, and reshape the ways in which the superior/submissive are studied. Education research that seeks to undo binaries is not concerned with the dominated being given fair treatment by dominant interests, because this encourages them to focus passively on what they can expect from the dominant. The undoing of the binaries is attempted through acting together based on the presupposition that the dominated are as intelligent

as the dominant, even if the latter do not recognize or acknowledge that intellectual equality.

The accounts in this book pose insightful new questions about the complicated task of moving beyond binaries in and through education research. The focus can be on developing unambiguous prescriptions for use of the terms involved in binaries by arguing for conceptual clarity. The emphasis here is on conceptual abstractions that tend to be vague and lack any empirical reference. A shift to emphasize consistency in reasoning through the logical analysis of binaries offers insights into the contradictory framing of education researchers' thinking. The irony in the strategy of questioning the uses of binaries by authoritative sources carries with it a necessary presumption of an authoritative stance on the part of education researchers, opening such critiques to being domesticated or neutralized. Critiques of the binaries built into the educational structures they uphold have proven precarious strategies, offering few convincing procedures for transcending these binaries.

The efforts at moving beyond binaries in education research represented by the accounts in this book reaffirm and review the critical function of education research through reexamining the concepts and methods for challenging binaries. Together they point to the scope and limits of efforts to move beyond binaries as an objective and a method of education research that takes as its aims the rejection of subservience to sociopolitical domination or unquestioning acquiescence to intellectual authority, and creating new modes of education research and knowledge production.